

The *National Integrated Public Health Surveillance Systems and Reportable Conditions Act* will strengthen our public health system in the United States by improving our science infrastructure at all levels of government. Applied epidemiology, laboratory science, and public health informatics have greatly improved since the mid-1990's, but have not kept pace with the challenges we face today. Local public health departments must confront increased foodborne disease outbreaks, emerging infections such as West Nile Virus, growing antimicrobial resistance, pandemic flu, and environmental health threats, particularly to clean air and water.

Many parts of the local-state-federal disease surveillance system remain fragmented and paper-based, and have not fully benefited from new technologies that could improve the completeness and timeliness of reporting. A survey in 2005, the most recent data available, showed that less than half of all state health departments had operational electronic laboratory reporting (ELR).

This bill will provide an expansion of resources and new areas of special emphasis for several existing programs within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. These programs will identify and monitor the occurrence of infectious diseases and other conditions of public health importance, detect new and emerging infectious disease threats, identify and respond to disease outbreaks, and hire and train necessary professional staff.

The *National Integrated Public Health Surveillance Systems and Reportable Conditions Act* will enhance the nation's public health capacity by strengthening its core science infrastructure and ensuring a seamless, rapid flow of information. It will help us meet the serious public health challenges of today and tomorrow.



